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SUBJECT: NEW BARBADOS CABINET SWORN IN

11. (SBU) In a four-hour ceremony January 20 that included an extensive ecumenical service, the Governor General of Barbados officially swore into office the new cabinet. New PM David Thompson used the event to set the tone for his government's priorities: to manage expectations for the economy in the face of global competition and a possible U.S. recession; to work to reduce the cost of living, especially for the poorest Barbadians, to diversify the economy and grow jobs; and to provide an improved social safety net. During his remarks, Thompson recognized Dominica PM Skerrit's attendance, noting (to thunderous applause) that the two PM's would soon discuss mechanisms to "break up the monopolies that control our food supply" and "keep Dominican food rotting on the docks" when it could be "delivered fresh to Barbados." - a thinly-veiled swipe at local transportation and distribution monopolies controlled by a small, and very rich, business elite.

12. (U) New members of the cabinet are listed below. Bio reporting on cabinet members to follow septel:

Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Economic Affairs and Development, Labor, Civil Service and Energy - David Thompson

Leader of Government Business in the Senate and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office - Ms. Maxine McClean

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office for Finance and Energy - Mr. Darcy Boyce

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office for Employment, Labor Relations and the Social Partnership - Mr. Arnie Walters

Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs - Mr. Freundel Stuart

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business - Mr. Christopher Sinckler

Minister of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and International Business - Mr. Donville Inniss

Minister of Health, National Insurance, and Social Security - Dr. David Estwick

Minister of Education and Human Resource Development - Mr. Ronald Jones

Minister of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban Development - Dr. Dennis Lowe

Minister of State in the Ministry of Social Care, Constituency Empowerment and Urban Development - Mr. Patrick Todd

Minister of Tourism - Mr. Richard Sealy

Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development - Mr. Haynesley
Benn

Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce - Mr. George Hutson

Minister of Housing and Lands - Mr. Michael Lashley

Minister of Family, Youth Affairs, Sport and Environment -
Dr. Esther Byer-Suckoo

Minister of Community Development and Culture - Mr. Steven
Blackett

Minister of Transport, Works and International Transport -
Mr. John Boyce
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